

**Charter of the  
Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network  
Inventory and Monitoring Program**

**Board of Directors**

Revised September 17, 2002

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Alec Gould  
Superintendent  
Colonial NHP

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Date

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Barry Sullivan  
Acting Superintendent  
Fire Island NS

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Date

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Elizabeth Johnson  
NE Region I&M Coordinator

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Date

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Dr. John Karish  
Chief Scientist  
Philadelphia Support Office

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Date

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Lorenza Fong  
Superintendent  
Sagamore Hill NHS

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Date

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Marc Koenings  
Superintendent  
Gateway NRA

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Date

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Maria Burks  
Superintendent  
Cape Cod NS

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Date

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Dr. Mary Foley  
Chief Scientist  
Boston Support Office

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Date

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Michael Hill  
Superintendent  
Assateague Island NS

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Date

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Vidal Martinez  
Superintendent  
George Washington Birthplace NM &  
Thomas Stone NHS

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Date

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Dr. W. Bryan Milstead  
Network I&M Coordinator

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Date

**Charter of the  
Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network  
Inventory and Monitoring Program  
Board of Directors**  
Amendment #1: August, 2003

Amendment #1 to the Charter for the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network was submitted to the Network's Board of Directors for approval. All Board Members who responded voted to accept the amendment. In accordance with the Network Charter, the amendment is accepted by consensus and the decision is confirmed by the Superintendent of Cape Cod National Seashore.

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Maria Burks, Superintendent  
Cape Cod National Seashore

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Date

**Charter of the  
Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network  
Inventory and Monitoring Program  
Board of Directors**

Revised September 17, 2002

Introduction

This charter supports the goals of the National Park Service Natural Resource Challenge to inventory and monitor ecosystem health on Park Service lands. The purpose of this document is to describe the basic practices to be used to plan, organize, manage, evaluate and modify the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network “Vital Signs” Monitoring Program. The Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network parks include:

- Assateague Island National Seashore (ASIS)
- Cape Cod National Seashore (CACO)
- Gateway National Recreation Area (GATE)
- Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS)
- Colonial National Historical Park (COLO)
- George Washington Birthplace National Monument (GEWA)
- Thomas Stone National Historic Site (THST)
- Sagamore Hill National Historic Site (SAHI)

The Coastal and Barrier Network Board of Directors is comprised of, 7 park superintendents, the Northeast Region I & M Coordinator, the Coastal and Barrier Network Coordinator, and the BOSO and PHSO Chief Scientists. The Board of Directors will pursue a holistic approach in defining Network management issues and resources of concern, identifying the best place to monitor these resources using scientifically credible standards.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The major responsibilities of the Board of Directors are:

- Require accountability and effectiveness for the I&M Program by reviewing progress, quality control, and spending of Network funds.
- Provide guidance to the Network Coordinator, Network Data Manager, Technical Steering Committee (See subgroups section) and natural resource staffs of the Network’s parks in the purpose, design and implementation of vital signs monitoring and other management activities related to the Natural Resource Challenge.
- Decide on strategies and procedures for leveraging Network funds and personnel to best accomplish inventory and monitoring and other natural resource needs of Network parks.
- Consult on hiring Network personnel using funding provided to the Network, including base funds and other sources.
- Seek additional financial support to leverage the Servicewide funds.

- Solicit professional guidance from and partnerships with other governmental agencies, organizations and individuals.
- Serve as advocates for the Natural Resource Challenge and promote understanding of the importance of the Inventory and Monitoring program among park staff, visitors and decision makers.

### Procedures

*Board Meetings:* Any member can call a meeting of the Board, but there will be at least one formal meeting annually. If travel logistics are difficult to arrange then Board meetings may be held by telephone, video, or internet conference. All members will be notified of all meetings. Formal meetings will require a written agenda distributed at least one week before. When important decisions need to be made details must be included with the agenda so board members can decide whether to attend or send an alternate. At the end of each meeting members will be designated by the Board to arrange the logistics and agenda for the next meeting. Telephone conference meetings, to deal with a small number of topics, may be called by any member. Simple matters can be resolved via electronic mail.

*Alternates and Quorums:* Board meetings are open to Technical Steering Committee members and other invitees. Any Board member who cannot participate in a meeting of the Board may assign an alternate. A park superintendent from the Network may not serve as the alternate, or carry the proxy of another park superintendent. If the above mentioned procedures for calling a board meeting are followed then all board members and designated alternates that attend will constitute a quorum; members who do not attend forfeit their right to vote and must accept the Board's decisions.

*Decision Making:* All decisions are made by consensus. Consensus is an outcome that all Board members can live with even if not ideal from any one viewpoint. If the Board cannot reach a consensus decision; then the matter, with all viewpoints represented, will be referred to the Associate Regional Director for Science and Stewardship for final decision. All decisions will be documented with deadlines and responsible individuals identified. The Superintendent of Cape Cod National Seashore is authorized to sign documents for the Board of Directors once consensus is reached.

*Strategic Plan:* A strategic plan covering the purpose, scope, objectives and goals of the Coastal and Barrier Network's Inventory and Monitoring program and its relationship with other NPS programs and the I&M efforts of other land and resource managers will be developed by the Network I&M Coordinator and Technical Steering Committee. The strategic plan will be approved by the Board no later than one year after the Network Coordinator has been hired. The Network Strategic Plan will cover the same term as the Servicewide Strategic Plan. It will be reviewed annually and revised as needed.

*Monitoring Plan:* A monitoring plan that identifies what will be monitored, where, when and how it will be monitored and how data will be managed, will be prepared by the Network I&M Coordinator, other Network staff, Cooperators and the Technical Steering

Committee. The Board of Directors will approve this plan. The initial monitoring plan will be completed no later than January 2004. It will be revised at the same time as the servicewide strategic plan.

*Annual Work Plan and Report:* Working with appropriate subgroups and others, the Network I&M Coordinator will present a proposed Annual Work Plan and an annual report of accomplishments to the Board for discussion, modification and approval no later than November 30<sup>th</sup> each year. The Annual Work Plan will identify proposed and actual accomplishments and products, responsible individuals and cooperators, funding and its sources (NPS and others), and budget. A detailed accounting of the use of all I&M program funds assigned to each park and office will be appended to the Annual Report. This Annual Report will be widely distributed and posted on appropriate websites. The Annual Report will be released no later than December 31 of each year. Each year the Board and the Technical Steering Committee will prepare a budget for the travel, per diem and any other costs associated with the conduct of their meetings. These costs will be summarized in the Annual Work Plan.

*Five Year Program Review:* Beginning at the last year of the Strategic Plan and thereafter the Network will undertake a comprehensive program review to be conducted by national and regional NPS specialists and qualified independent specialists from other agencies and organizations. The purpose of this review will be to evaluate accomplishments and products, protocols used for gathering data, data management, fiscal management, and staffing. The Program Review will provide the principal basis for any significant changes in program direction as well as reassignment of resources to any park or office.

*Funding:* Available I&M program funds will be distributed to Network parks and offices as directed through the Annual Work Plan. All I&M program funds must be strictly accounted for using a discrete PWE code and disclosed in the Annual Report. Using these funds for purposes other than in support of the Network's strategic and monitoring plans constitutes cause for their reassignment within the Network. Additionally, funds contributed by parks, other NPS programs and other sources will be carefully tracked and reported on.

*Staffing:*

Staff hired under this program will be supervised and administratively supported by the Network I&M Coordinator in conjunction with the park or office at which they are stationed. Administrative support for travel and training will be provided by the Network. The Network I&M Coordinator will be directly supervised by the Regional I&M Coordinator.

Subgroups

A standing Coastal and Barrier Network Technical Steering Committee has been formed to provide technical assistance and advice to the Board in developing a long-term monitoring strategy. This committee (10-12 members) is comprised of Network natural resource managers, biologists and scientists, from outside of the NPS who work in the

parks and are familiar with park issues. The Technical Steering Committee has been and will be responsible for:

- Compiling and summarizing existing information about park resources.
- Developing materials for and summarizing the findings and recommendations of any scoping workshops held to develop a Network monitoring strategy.
- Participating in the identification of monitoring objectives and development of the Network Strategic Plan.
- Assisting in the selection of vital signs.
- Coordinating peer review of protocols.
- Evaluating initial sampling designs, methods and protocols.
- Reviewing annual data reports and interpretation as well as participating in the preparation of the Annual Work Plan and Annual Report.
- Developing materials for and facilitating the Five Year Program Review.
- Designing of PD's and hiring of Network personnel.

The products and recommendations of the Technical Steering Committee will be presented to the Board by the Network Coordinator for discussion and approval or modification. In 2004, the Board of Directors may select new Technical Steering Committee members.

When needed the Board, Technical Steering Committee, Network I&M Coordinator and/or the Regional I&M Coordinator may form groups of specialists to work on a particular task or a particular sub-program area. No such group will be formed without inclusion of a specific "sunset" provision.

### Coordination

To be most effective, the Board will need to maintain a close working relationship with the Chief of Natural Resources of each park in the Network, members of the Technical Steering Committee, the Network I&M Coordinator and the Regional I&M Coordinator. Board members are encouraged to participate in and/or keep informed with respect to the work of the Technical Steering Committee. The Network I&M Coordinator will be expected to provide regular briefings (by memoranda, electronic mail or telephone conference) to the Board.

### Partnerships

The Network I&M Program must work with others to achieve its natural resource goals. The design and implementation of a successful "Vital Signs" monitoring program in the Coastal and Barrier Network will require cooperation with public agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations. A key partnership will be with the Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU) based at the University of Rhode Island. The Network I&M program will include other land and resource managers (federal, state, and tribal) in the Coastal and Barrier Network area. The Network Charter may be amended to identify

the conditions under which Board membership may be expanded to include non-NPS participants. In no case will this be done without consensus of the Board.

#### Role of the Cape Cod National Seashore Prototype Monitoring Program

It was recognized early on by the Servicewide I&M Program that the tremendous variability among parks in ecological conditions, sizes, and management capabilities represent significant problems for any attempt to institutionalize ecological monitoring throughout the Service. To develop monitoring expertise throughout this range of ecological and managerial diversity, natural resource park units were grouped into 10 major biogeographic areas or biomes, and one park unit from each major biome was then selected to serve as a prototype for that biome. Cape Cod National Seashore (CACO) was chosen as the prototype park for the Atlantic Coast. Design and testing of monitoring protocols at CACO has begun and is being led by biologists at CACO as well as scientists from the Biological Resources Division (BRD) of the U.S. Geological Survey.

*As a “Center of Excellence”* – Cape Cod National Seashore will play an important role in the implementation of and on going success of the Coastal and Barrier Network’s monitoring program. As a prototype park CACO was chosen to serve as a “center of excellence” that will do more in-depth monitoring and continue research and development in their monitoring program to benefit other parks in the Network. The CACO prototype monitoring program was established primarily in an attempt to learn how to design a scientifically credible and cost-effective monitoring program in the ecological setting of the Atlantic Coast. CACO will assist in the design, development, and testing of monitoring protocols and methods and may provide instruction in the use of products to other parks in the Coastal and Barrier Network.

*As a Mentor* – CACO’s prototype monitoring program possesses a wealth of experience and expertise related to the development and implementation of ecological monitoring that can greatly benefit other parks in the Network; therefore, CACO will provide mentoring assistance to the other parks. Personnel from CACO will be expected to advise and provide technical assistance to staff in the other parks on a wide variety of technical issues related to monitoring, including conceptual design, database management, data integration and analysis, and reporting of monitoring findings.

#### Role of the Cape Cod, Assateague, and Gateway Learning Centers

Three Learning Centers will serve the Coastal and Barrier Network to facilitate and encourage Federal scientists, faculty, graduate students, and other researchers from all disciplines to use the parks in the Network as places of inquiry. Providing such infrastructure will leverage NPS fiscal resources by attracting outside sources of funding to support science in these parks. A role each Learning Center will play, will be to bring researchers closer to the natural resources, facilitate collaborative studies, assist park and Network staff, and obtain greater direct and in-kind financial support. By providing access to park resources and limited park logistical support, the Learning Centers will leverage significant financial and research assistance for projects identified by Network

park managers. Learning Centers will provide a mechanism for meeting the goal of the I&M Program to make information as accessible as possible. As other learning centers become available within the Network, they will be incorporated into the program.

### Reporting

The Network I&M Coordinator will circulate Board and Technical Steering Committee meeting minutes and copies of the Annual Work Plan, Annual Report and Strategic Plan to all members of the Board and Technical Steering Committee. The Network I&M Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the Administrative Record and insuring fiscal accountability.

### Amendments

The Board may amend this Charter at any time. The Network I&M Coordinator will provide a 30 day advanced notice to all Board members of any proposed amendments before they are voted on. Amendments will be made by consensus.



**Charter of the  
Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network  
Inventory and Monitoring Program  
Board of Directors**  
Amendment #1: August, 2003

This amendment designates a Point of Contact for the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network (NCBN) Databases as follows:

I. NCBN Point of Contact Justification

The National Park Species database ("NPSpecies") was developed by the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Program to store, manage and disseminate scientific information on the biodiversity of organisms in National Parks throughout the United States and its territories. The master version of NPSpecies is a password-protected, web-based system; this is accompanied by a PC-based version that can be run from an individual computer using Microsoft Access. The Service-wide Inventory and Monitoring Program has requested that parks designate Points of Contact (POC) for managing NPSpecies data for each park.

This Amendment establishes the NCBN Data Manager as the NPSpecies POC for all 8 park units within the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network, defines the roles and responsibilities of the POC, and provides a means to change the POC designation.

II. NCBN NPSpecies Point of Contact Responsibilities

- 1. Manage web-based NPSpecies access.* The POC will acquire login and password codes for all network park staff needing access to NPSpecies via the Internet, and will ensure that the appropriate level of database permissions and control are granted (e.g., read only, read-edit, or read-edit-delete access). The POC will cancel permissions in the event staff employment, duty station, or responsibilities change.
- 2. Provide orientation, training, and technical support to park staff on NPSpecies use.* The POC will instruct NPSpecies users on the overall structure and function of NPSpecies (both web-based and local versions), provide explanations and documentation on its use; and assist with questions users may have on how to query or manipulate NPSpecies data.
- 3. Convert legacy datasets into formats compatible with NPSpecies.* The POC will work with park staff to locate datasets containing NPSpecies-related information, and to merge any appropriate portions of these datasets into NPSpecies.
- 4. Ensure that voucher data obtained by WASO from national data mining efforts is accurately converted to NPSpecies and reviewed.* As WASO staff obtains park-specific data from national and regional museums and herbaria, the POC will ensure that these

data are accurately converted to NPSpecies and that these data are made available for review by park-based staff.

5. *Ensure any new NPSpecies-related data collected from I&M or park projects are incorporated into NPSpecies.* The POC will work with I&M cooperators and park resource management staff to ensure that NPSpecies is properly updated to reflect any new data collected in the course of park research or management projects.

6. *Ensure that sensitive data are designated as such and that user access permissions are coded appropriately.* The POC will work with park staff to identify these records for each park.

7. *Ensure that species lists are reviewed by appropriate individuals and certified.* The completeness and accuracy of species-list data in NPSpecies will be assessed by qualified reviewers (park staff or other) on a regular basis (DO #11B: Ensuring Quality of Information Disseminated by the National Park Service). The POC will be responsible for ensuring this review and certification process is undertaken and completed.

8. *Ensure that new species vouchers destined for entry into ANCS+ are also entered into NPSpecies.*

Data associated with species vouchers are now compatible between ANCS+ and NPSpecies. The POC will coordinate with parks so that, to the extent possible, voucher data are entered directly into NPSpecies then exported electronically to ANCS+, thus avoiding duplication of data entry.

9. *Ensure that species nomenclature used for park species lists is referenced and accepted by leading authorities, and, to the extent possible, is compatible among network parks.*

10. *Ensure that all sources of NPSpecies records are documented, and that additions, changes or deletions to records are substantiated and performed with the concurrence of park staff.*

Successful NPSpecies development and administration depends on ongoing coordination and good communication between the POC and park staff. A close working relationship between the POC and park resource management and curatorial staff will be emphasized at all times.

### III.NPSpecies Point of Contact Designation

By this agreement, the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network, Inventory and Monitoring Program Data Manager is designated as the NPSpecies ‘Point of Contact’ (POC) on NPSpecies issues and management for each of the 8 park units within NCBN. As POC for each park the NCBN Data Manager will meet the responsibilities listed under Section II of this agreement. A centralized effort at the network level helps ensure high quality control standards and relieves park resource management staff from many of the ongoing

tasks related to NPSpecies database management. Database work will be closely coordinated between the NCBN Data Manager and individual park staff and NPSpecies data will be readily accessible and available to park personnel. The NCBN Data Manager will serve in the POC role for each park until such time that park species list development and certification is complete. At this time individual parks will have the choice of naming their own POC or continuing with the NCBN Data Manager as the park POC. It is anticipated that most parks within the network will want the NCBN Data Manager to continue as their POC over the long-term. However, some park units with sufficient natural resource staff and expertise may desire to take over the POC role and on-going data base maintenance and quality control once individual park species lists have been developed and certified. In this case a park may request that the POC designation be changed. The NCBN Data Manager will keep track of POC designations for network parks if they change in the future.

Amendment #1 to the Charter for the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network was submitted to the Network's Board of Directors for approval. All Board Members who responded voted to accept the amendment. In accordance with the Network Charter, the amendment is accepted by consensus and the decision is confirmed by the Superintendent of Cape Cod National Seashore.

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Maria Burks, Superintendent  
Cape Cod National Seashore

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Date